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ABSTRACT

Several different approaches have been taken to cross-cultural training in Peace Corps Training programs. Three of these might be referred to as the intellectual model (consisting of lectures on the host country culture), the area simulation model (placing the trainees in a surrounding which in some way resembles the country in which they will be working), and the self-awareness model (providing sensitivity training in the hope that it will make the trainee receptive to a new environment). A more valid approach would be to follow the culture-awareness model: by making trainees aware of the nature of culture, in the anthropologists' sense of the term, they will be better able to view a culture, either their own or someone else's, with objectivity. A drawback in developing a consistent approach in Peace Corps training programs is the emphasis on short term arrangements in planning and staffing, with little or no continuity from one program to the next. (mf)

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Fables, Fancies and Failures in Cross-Cultural Training

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Dr. James F. Downs

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

At the age of thirty, after having worked as a newspaperman, professional horseman and farmer, to say nothing of six years in the U.S. Navy, Jim Downs decided to get a college education.

His intention was to major in History, but in his freshman year he happened to take a course in Anthropology -- and that did it. In 1958 he took his Bachelor's (and made Phi Beta Kappa), in 1960 his Master's, and in 1961 his Ph.D. -- all in Anthropology, all at the Berkeley campus of the University of California.

That's quite a track record, going all the way to a Ph.D. in five years at a place like Berkeley -- and what makes it even more remarkable is the fact that all this time he was working on the outside, mostly in Public Relations.

Dr. James F. Downs has made mighty good time, too, in the eight years that have followed. Upon leaving Berkeley, he went to the University of Washington on a language fellowship, studying Chinese and Japanese -- and it was here that he developed his interest in Tibet, an interest which was to take him to India for research on Tibetan refugees in 1966, and again in 1968.

Between the time he left Seattle and arrived at the Hilo Center in the spring of 1969, he taught at the University of Rochester in New York, California State College in Los Angeles, and the University of Arizona. He is now Cross-Cultural Specialist at the Hilo Center, and also teaches a seminar at the Manoa campus of the University of Hawaii, where he ranks as Associate Professor of Anthropology.

His books include Washo Religion, 1961; Animal Husbandry in Navajo Society and Culture, 1964; The Two Worlds of the Washo, Holt, Rinehardt and Winston, 1966; and Human Variation, an Introduction to Physical Anthropology, 1969, Glencoe Press, which he co-authored with H. K. Bliebtreu.

In preparation are Nez Ch'ii, a Pastoral Community of the Navajo Indian Reservation, (in press), Holt, Rinehardt and Winston; Conflicts in Culture, the Idea of Culture in Modern Life, (in press), Glencoe Press; and Pilgrimage in Tibetan Society and Culture, of which he is co-author.

Dr. Downs is a fellow of the American Anthropological Association and a member of the Tibet Society.

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INTRODUCTION

The growing list of international-development failures, partial successes and inexplicable accomplishments has forced those involved in training to consider dimensions of inter-cultural projects which heretofore have been assumed or ignored. This variable is what we have come to call, in Peace Corps, the Cross-Cultural Component. Recognition of the need for specific training for the Volunteer or other person, in order to survive and function successfully in another culture, raises a number of questions of what a Volunteer needs to know and how this content is most efficaciously taught.

Cross-cultural training programs have varied enormously in content and method, and even more in success or failure. However, it is a fair and, I think, safe statement that, overall, Peace Corps does not have a cross-cultural training policy, nor even a body of thought which we can dignify with the term philosophy. The recent conferences held at Capahosick and Estes Park suggest a growing awareness of the cross-cultural dimension, and have brought into focus various approaches to cross-cultural training which have been attempted and explored.

This paper presents in some detail a cross-cultural training approach which is being developed and applied at the University of Hawaii Training Center in Hilo. Nothing, I am sure, is new in the sense of being developed solely in the minds or research of a single person or research team. On the other hand, it would be endlessly tedious to cite all the sources which have from time to time mentioned ideas and methods being used in the Hilo Center program. Rather, I will hope to present: a theoretical or ideological justification for the inclusion of cultural material; a discussion of what kinds of cultural material should be included; and some means, tried or projected, for conveying this information.

FABLES, FANCIES AND FAILURES IN CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING

The most common statement in discussing cross-cultural training for Peace Corps appears to be, "Well, they should know something about...."

From that point the list grows, seemingly limited only by the imagination or the bias and experiences of the participants in the planning meetings. History, economics, "customs," culture, family patterns, religion, "some role playing," sensitivity, eating host-country foods, simulation situations, stress situations, contact with host-country nations, self-awareness, American foreign policy and its consequences, kinesics, host-country politics were only some of the subject areas suggested in a single pre-planning meeting I attended recently. In essence, such a list suggests that as an institution we are not as yet certain precisely what constitutes the cross-cultural dimension of training or, in fact, of the Peace Corps experience. Before exploring content in cross-cultural studies, it might be well to review briefly the history of the cultural dimension in Peace Corps as seen by a relative outsider.

Even before the election of John F. Kennedy, the Peace Corps idea was in the air. An idea, as the late Senator Dirksen would say, whose time had come, the Volunteer movement rose from many sources. The Friends, of course, had been involved in such work for some time without creating much national enthusiasm. Various critics of our foreign-aid operations had pointed out the failures in cultural understanding which translated into project failures in the field. In official and intellectual circles, the book by William J. Lederer and the late Eugene Burdick, The Ugly American, (who, despite official and public

usage, was the hero of the book) had had enormous impact, and Burdick himself was fast becoming the center of an informal cabal of scholars, officials and others who were wrestling with the idea of something like the movement which later became Peace Corps. The Overseas American,* a more formal and better documented study of the subject, did not enjoy the popular success of The Ugly American, but had much impact in official and scholarly circles. My own inspiration rose, influenced on the one hand by Burdick's and on the other by the hopelessness and futility of much orthodox effort being expended in the domestic underdeveloped nation, the Navajo Reservation. Without exploring the conflicting claims of the various personal historians of the Kennedy Administration as to who "invented the idea,"** there is no doubt that his Peace Corps suggestion fell on fertile ground and rallied a number of people of influence and imagination to set the idea in motion.

It is difficult to see at this point in time precisely how the administration or the nation as a whole saw this new figure, the Peace Corps Volunteer. The various triumphs of the President and his family, which included use of a foreign tongue in France, Germany and Latin America, most certainly set the tone. The PCV must speak the language. The example of our affluent and isolated diplomatic and military staffs overseas established a second negative example: the PCV must live like the natives. He must be dedicated, willing and motivated. Somehow this combination of skills and attitudes was viewed as prelude to a successful transfer of American know-how into underdeveloped

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(*) Harlan Cleveland, Gerald J. Mangone, John Clark Adams, The Overseas American, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1964.

(**) An anthropologist, at least by profession, should recognize ideas as expressions of, not shapers of, cultural patterns and innovations.

countries. Most certainly there was the expectation that the PCV would have a measurable amount of American know-how.

Living like the native was, apparently, viewed as being able to rough it -- to do without American luxuries in order to survive -- and this would present a new image of Americans to foreigners. To suggest that perhaps people of other cultures were different in more subtle ways: that their ways of life were not only materially less rich, but also quite different in attitudes and values, was to raise unpleasant and all too many irrelevant details. The idea that African attitudes toward single women living alone might make it difficult for a female PCV to work might be brushed off as academic pettifogging, and not very brotherly. A refusal to face these facts of cultural differences in the early, heady days of Peace Corps repulsed many anthropologists who had rallied willingly to the cause, and understandably felt their professional experience in other cultures under near-native conditions should be considered more seriously. But it is also understandable why Peace Corps should have found much of the anthropological contribution irrelevant to its mission. Trained and conditioned in the plodding ways of academe, many anthropologists were unable to separate what was relevant to a PCV and what might not be. I have recently reviewed an enormous pile of readings prepared for Malaysian trainees and found among them a long paper on Pithecanthropus erectus, whose life some 500,000 years ago was conceived of as being relevant to a modern Volunteer.

Other groups of trainees were confronted with short courses in introductory anthropology. In a report to his professional association, an anthropologist active in Peace Corps work boasted, "We are

teaching some real anthropology." Other trainees, it would seem, received little of what we could call cross-cultural training, other than a few lectures and some assigned readings dealing with host-country history and customs.

And, of course, there was WACUS, which stood for World Affairs, Communism and the United States. This grab-bag of subject matter was intended to illustrate to the trainee the threat of what was then conceived of as World Communism, and to outline the U.S. Foreign Policy. From my experience, it was reluctantly taught to reluctant trainees, and was inevitably a bore. Most certainly it did little or nothing to contribute a cross-cultural sensitivity.

WACUS gave way to WACAS, meaning World Affairs, Communism and Area Studies, which attempted to emphasize more directly the nature of the country or region to which the Volunteer would be assigned. From reviewing materials prepared for this component, and talking to Volunteers who survived the training, it would appear that Area Studies was very much the parallel of area studies in university programs. An attempt was made to provide a wide range of information about history, economics, politics, culture and customs... just as area studies programs in universities skip disciplinary lines to provide a broader body of knowledge about an area or region.

Through all these early days, there were attempts to provide more meaningful training. Volunteers for Latin America were exposed to the Spanish-speaking population of East Los Angeles, went into the Imperial Valley or into Baja, California, for short work and exposure trips, or were trained in Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, almost from the beginning, attempts were made to involve the

trainees with the non-white island population. Waipio Valley, on the Island of Hawaii, lush and tropical, was converted to a kind of South-east Asia Disneyland, complete with carabao and houses of various regional styles. Attempts were made to find the physical setting which would approximate the host country.

Seldom did these activities fall under separate components, but usually were part of technical training. In itself this is not an important matter, and might well be beneficial; however, the real weakness was that there was virtually no theoretical justification for any of these activities, save that it seemed like a good idea at the time. From the beginning, the Hilo Center utilized such devices as live-ins, community involvement, and all the other approaches which were suggested. The drawback was that these activities really lacked any theoretical justification, nor were they necessarily related to each other in any special way. Was it better to have a live-in with a family, or should nuclear housing* be provided? Should communities be picked because they were most like the host country socially and environmentally, or did it make any difference? Should a live-in come before or after an introduction to culture studies? What the hell was culture?

These seem to be questions which we seldom asked and if so, the answers were never recorded. Much of this problem can be laid at the feet of Peace Corps training policy, which was, in fact, no policy at all. Everyone (I think) agreed that training should be done, but they also agreed it should be done as quickly and cheaply as possible, and incomprehensibly, the basic training unit of Peace Corps, even in continuing training centers, was the individual

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(*) Several trainees living together in a community, in their own house.

project. Planning, staffing and training therefore have no history or little perspective.

And then there was sensitivity. Precisely how this particular approach found its way into Peace Corps training is not at all clear to me, although I believe I was associated with one of the earliest training programs to use sensitivity sessions. Most certainly at that time no clear-cut justification was made...it seemed like a new, exciting and fun idea. It very nearly destroyed a project. Somehow, sensitivity and pseudo-sensitivity training came to be thought of as part of the cross-cultural component of training. How a number of middle-class college graduates from white America were going to become sensitive to the persons of Indian or Columbian or Thai peasants by interacting with each other was apparently not considered. From the point of view of a professional in cultural problems, sensitivity training in all probability is counter-productive, because it gives the participant the idea that he is sensitive to human beings when in fact he may be sensitive to himself and a few people like him. Inasmuch as sensitivity groups are an artifact of American culture, like football and Congress, the outcome is generally an even more American product than what went in. The sensitivity-group approach is, for cultural training, a serious misdirection because it assumes that the aims and goals of sensitivity training are universally accepted as good, and that directness, honesty, etc., are acceptable in other cultures. In short, an American sensitivity group strives for honest and direct feedback. However, a Thai sensitivity group might well strive for even more indirect means of conveying personal comment, and more elaborate devices for saving the other person's face. One would

have to be the epitome of American ethnocentrism to conclude that the former system was universally the best and represented more personal sensitivity than the latter.

These rather personal and highly biased observations are presented as a matter of general introduction to a discussion of what appears to me to be three general styles of cross-cultural training which have evolved in Peace Corps training. Perhaps no specific center or training facility, or even project, can be said to present a pure example of any type. Rather, these are ideal models around which certain techniques and approaches seem to cluster.

I. THE INTELLECTUAL MODEL.

The first session of a planning meeting for a program based on the intellectual model is probably, "What shall we teach them?" or, "What do they have to know?" After that, scheduling takes place, in which various available experts, primarily college professors, are collated with various subject areas. Depending on the bias of the staff, the in-country staff, the Washington desk man, the area operations officer, various professorial consultants, and assorted RPCVs, a series of lectures is programmed in which information is presented about a wide range of subjects. Not infrequently, tests are given and performance is evaluated on this basis. This is perhaps what Harrison has called the University Model, although to my way of thinking that is rather unfair to the University.*

(*) Harrison, Roger and Richard L. Hopkins, 1967, The Design of Cross-Cultural Training: An Alternative to the University Model. Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. III (4).

Supplementing the lectures, a range of activities may be developed from community involvement projects, through "cultural night," listening to host-country music, eating host-country foods, etc. From a cross-cultural point of view, the general style of training produces a person who knows a great deal specifically about the country involved.

If a trainee has listened well and memorized well, he would be able to make oral or written presentations about all sorts of important things -- from the sexual habits of the Thais to the concept of face in interpersonal relations, to the role of malaria in retarding national development, to a discussion of folk beliefs in rural Malaysia. However, he would have little grasp of the reality of an inter-cultural situation. All too often he will view the information he has received as explaining for him the behavior of host-country nationals in the field. He will be equipped to prejudge every act and experience, and not be able to understand what happens to him at all. One suspects that the best performer during training may well be the one doomed to the most frustration as a Volunteer.

Any information conveyed in this manner will of needs be composed of generalizations. The Volunteer, however, will face not generalized Thai, Malaysia or Tongan behavior, but highly specific and personal behavior. Most often he will not be able to relate this behavior to the lecture on values or morals, nor be able to see how a deficit export, import and balance are expressed in a Tongan or Korean household. The poorer student may have forgotten the lectures, and thus be thrust on his own devices for explanations. Because he has none on hand he may develop for himself the right one, or at least the one which serves him best.

A general dissatisfaction with the pure intellectual model, I think, soon led to the next, which I call:

II. THE AREA SIMULATION MODEL.

This approach to training is to try to create a situation as nearly like the host country as possible. One of the first considerations in such a simulation is physical environment, with great stress placed on climate, scenery, palm trees, etc. The physical appearance of the population of the training area may be important in planning (certainly simulation-thinking must have suggested that rural black schools in Louisiana were useful in training people for East Africa; after all, they were black, weren't they?). Attempts to recreate the material settings of host countries have been made, perhaps most elaborately in Hawaii, where the Waipio Valley boasts five carabao and houses built with absolute authenticity in various Southeast Asian styles.

Simulation has also included often successful involvements with local populations, perhaps most successfully in Puerto Rico, where training for Latin America has taken place. Most certainly some sort of simulation-thinking must have been going on when the Virgin Islands was selected and utilized for West African training. Hawaii's multi-ethnic Asian population certainly played an important part in choosing Hawaii for many training activities. Simulation model training often employs a great deal of role playing and similar pretend situations which are thought to parallel the future assignment, and future situations which the trainee may have to face as a Volunteer. In short, the theme of simulation is to make the training situation as much like the assignment situation as one can.

The major drawback of simulation, in my view, is that it is impossible to make the training situation like the field situation. Try as one might, Waipio Valley is not Thailand or the Philippines; Molokai is not Samoa or Tonga, nor is Louisiana, East Africa, or Puerto Rico, Bolivia. It may be very similar, but the thrust of simulation-training is to emphasize how much the same it is.

Certainly one of the drawbacks of this kind of training is that simulators have all too often focused on surface similarities (climate and scenery, the racial make-up of the population) rather than on social, structural or economic parallels. Simulation all too often results in a trainee who feels he has "seen it like it is," but who finds out that in fact he hasn't. The shift from simulation to reality is, I am sure, more apt to produce culture shock than cultural awareness.

III. THE SELF-AWARENESS MODEL.

This approach emphasizes the trainee's understanding of himself, and devotes a great amount of time to development of the training population as a smooth operating unit. In this model, sensitivity and related activities would play an important role. Inasmuch as this seems quite unrelated to true cross-cultural training, why discuss it here?

A NEW TREND: THE CULTURE-AWARENESS MODEL

At this point it would be wise to examine two questions before elaborating on a specific training model. The first question is simply, "What do we mean when we talk about culture?"

Unfortunately, this has not been asked very often in Peace Corps training. Rather, we have assumed what we meant when we said it, and all too often it is a term culled from the pages of McMacalls, the Greengreen Review or other popular journals. Anthropologists, who have made the concept of culture a central theme of their science, and who have popularized the term in various new vernacular usages, have never agreed upon a totally suitable definition of the term. However, anthropologists are completely aware of the dozens of variations in the definition and thus can talk about the concept. Amateurs unaware of nearly six decades of exploration in the social sciences tend not to treat the concept in the same way. Lacking a generally accepted definition, perhaps it would be wise to review the first definition, one which is still the basis for any other definition developed in anthropology.

In 1871 Sir Edward Taylor, in his book Primitive Society, defined culture as.....

> that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*

The operational word in the above definition is whole; that is, culture cannot be viewed as a group of disparate and unrelated

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(*) Reprinted in The Origins of Culture, Harper Torch Book, Harper Bros., New York, 1958.

practices, ceremonies, attitudes and points of review, but rather as an integrated explanation which each generation provides for the next, preparing it to act and react to social, physical and environmental situations.

Culture is not, as an FSO once said to me, a matter of "teaching them not to spit in the fishbowl." Such a remark indicates a common approach to cultural matters in Peace Corps training. Trainees are apt to be immersed in a series of don't dos. Don't point your foot at a Thai...don't pat a Micronesian on the head...don't hold hands with Filipinas in public.

It would be impossible to prepare a list of dos and don'ts long enough to cover all possible situations, even more impossible for a trainee to remember it if you did.

However, such an approach is not necessary and really only reveals a failure to understand the cultural concept. Rather than point out a single act which will upset a Thai, why not develop a generalization about Thai etiquette which is very clearly apparent from watching a handful of language instructors? The position one takes, particularly as it relates to relative height, is enormously important in interpersonal relations. In short, why not provide a trainee with a pattern to follow, or a means of analyzing his own situation, rather than a list of thou shalt or shalt nots?

Let us illustrate this again, because it is so important and so seldom realized in Peace Corps. Virtually every country in which Peace Corps serves produces its own mythology about time values. RPCVs and in-country staff speak knowingly and patronizingly of Philippine Time, Thai Time, Brazilian Time, as contrasted to American Time. American Time, of course, is accurate and demanding; people

here are prompt and observant of time, other people are not. One has demonstrated his "cross-culturalness" by becoming used to waiting. However, let's take a look at time in a comparative sense, rather than in isolation. America is an industrial nation. Our economic life depends on rather specific and rigid time schedules. Steel which is heated too long doesn't turn out as one wants it to. Rubber over-cooked or under-cooked won't vulcanize. Airplanes taking off irregularly, regularly collide with airplanes landing irregularly. In short, to Americans time <u>is</u> important and valuable.

To make this point clear to Americans, our culture emphasizes time and uses it in many ways which other cultures do not. Americans can insult or praise each other, declare their love or their disinterest, proclaim their importance or attempt to hide their unimportance, all by using time. To be prompt is to be polite, and demonstrates one's moral worth. To keep another person waiting is to suggest that you don't care for him too much or that his position is much lower than yours. A young man can demonstrate his devotion to a young lady by waiting while she completes her toilet; she, on the other hand, can test him by simply taking a few more minutes before she comes downstairs.

American culture emphasizes time, in many areas where it is not logically important, to insure that we recognize its importance in areas where it is a critical variable. In other words, our attitude toward time is part of a cultural whole and can be related to a number of other areas in our lives. For a foreigner coming to America, would it not be simpler for him to know the general rules about time rather than a long list of specific rules? With a general rule he can apply it in any situation and be more in tune with the

rhythms of America than he could with a yard-long list of do's and don'ts. Moreover, he has some understanding of why Americans are, in his terms, so silly about time. Were our PCVs similarly trained, they would perhaps not be so patronizing about the comparative promptness of their hosts, but rather understand it is part of the meaningful rhythm of a life-style rooted in the patterns of plant growth and seasonal climatic changes, rather than the cycles of the production line.

To sum up, the content of cross-cultural studies should be culture not customs. The trainee should be prepared to deal with the phenomenon of man's cultural nature, rather than with discrete, and to him often unrelated bits of customary behavior.

Essential introduction to and learning about culture has been, in the university, the province of anthropology, and it has been taught in the traditional way -- that is, intellectually, although various individual professors have attempted to involve their classes in culture rather than talk to them about culture. The problem posed for the Peace Corps and other inter-cultural agencies is that the trainee must be prepared to work in another culture in very intimate circumstances. With the exception of missionaries, the only other figure expected to live in the same relationship to another culture has been the professional anthropologist.

Oddly enough, anthropology as an academic discipline has never been able to solve the problems of how to train the pre-professional anthropologist for actual field work. A number of field schools of one kind or another have been developed, but generally speaking they have not been particularly successful, save in providing a modicum of experience. In part, this is because such schools have

been research-oriented. A student was expected to develop a research project, gather data, and write a report of some kind. However, the problems of living with foreign people, relating to them, recognizing evidence of cultural differences, etc., the problem of culture shock and a range of other considerations which are so important to the PCV and the anthropologist were seldom viewed as the central and justifying reason for establishing a field school. All of these were lumped under the rubric "developing rapport," which was important but really not as important as the academic exercise of "doing research."

The Peace Corps Volunteer, on the other hand, must view rapport building as the most important part of his assignment; one on which his job success will stand or fall. Thus Peace Corps training has been able to isolate the two components of field work, which the graduate departments of anthropology have not done. Peace Corps trains in cross-cultural studies (developing rapport) and in technical studies (doing research), and in so doing does not confuse the two aspects of inter-cultural work. Perhaps, in fact, Peace Corps training has developed techniques and attitudes which would be of use to the social sciences in general, in preparing professionals in the several disciplines devoted to field research.

Six Training Objectives

Having separated the technical, personality and cultural aspects of Peace Corps assignments, we are more able to define precisely what we expect training to produce. I say "produce" advisedly. Training, if it is to be done at all, should be undertaken with the clear expectation that it is directed at producing distinct behavioral and attitudinal changes in the trainee. That is, it is not simply a

period during which we decide whether the selection process in Washington provided suitable Volunteers, but rather a period during which we train people in suitable attitudes and skills.

General goals for cross-cultural training at Hawaii are:

1. A trainee who views himself as a cultural being, that is, a person who acts and reacts according to fairly well defined and generally predictable patterns which he has learned as a part of American culture. He should be able to recognize his own culture, operating through himself and other Americans, for what it is, and see this as simply one example of the phenomenon of culture.

2. A trainee who is observant and alert to human behavior as a guide to his own responses and a subject for analysis and generalization.

3. A trainee who sees his activities as a PCV in the broader context of human history and in the specific context of development (progress, what have you) within the country and region of assignment.

4. A trainee with confidence and experience with persons of cultural backgrounds other than his own or host country.

5. A trainee who views host-country culture with respect and as another example of the cultural phenomenon, subject to his personal exploration, analysis and understanding.

6. A trainee who can recognize the kind of special knowledge of history, economics, religion, politics and social structure he must have to do his job, and who possesses the skills to obtain this knowledge on his own.

These six points combine to draw a picture of what the trainee in-country can do, rather than what he can't do. It is a list of do's rather than don'ts.

A general principle for achieving these goals is that the trainee be moved toward them from a point of his own experience rather than someone else's. These experiences must be real experiences with relevance to his life and his future and to the society around him. Thus, the first principle is perhaps that cross-cultural studies are not amenable to simulation.

A Three-Phase Training Sequence

Now, to get to the heart of the training model proposed in this issue of trends, the following sequence is suggested as a general training guide for all training projects:

I. Introduction to culture as an organizing principle of thought.
   a. Other principles which have been used to explain human behavior.

1. race
2. environmental determinism
3. economic determinism
4. free will and the devil

b. Illustration of cultural behavior from American cultural patterns.

c. A rather intensive examination of American culture as expressed in the person of the trainee.

1. how his own views and attitudes and responses relate to general American patterns.
2. how these do not differ greatly from patterns and responses of non-American peoples, save in form.

d. The concept of function in understanding behavior.

II. Familiarization with a second culture through experience.

a. Direct contact with Hawaiian communities and individuals..

III. Familiarization with specific cultural information of the host country.

a. Formulation of questions.

b. Collection of data to answer those questions.

The precise means of carrying out this sequence will be shaped in large part by the goals of the program, time available, etc. However, these general propositions are suggested as guides:

Phase 1

The trainee enters training as a cultured being. He has had a lifetime, to date, of experience. That is, he has already had the first step in an experiential learning model. Our first step,

then, is not to provide more experiences, but rather to bring him to think on those experiences of his life more objectively. To this end I suggest that, in part, the trainee determine precisely what will be discussed. However, I do not advocate "heuristic programs." The subject of culture is perhaps best introduced by a lecture, preferably given to small groups rather than large ones: a lecture which can be interrupted at any point by questions. The kind of questions asked would reveal (1) the kind of sophistication of the trainees, and (2) their major concerns.

The requirement here is a speaker geared to handle American culture as a cultural phenomenon,* and who is flexible enough to accept trainee concerns as a guide for the direction of his introduction. As soon as possible, the matter of drawing illustrations from American culture must be passed (forced, if necessary) on to the trainee. Slogans, cliches and accepted analysis must be challenged as a matter of principle. The trainee must be forced to rethink himself. This will make him angry. He will protest that it is not relevant, that the trainer is imposing his views on the trainees, that the trainee's opinions are not being considered important. The Project Training Staff must be prepared for this, and be able to live with trainee disapproval during this period. In most cases, these opinions will change as the trainee begins to use the cultural frame of reference for analysis of social situations.

Certain experiential exercises can be introduced at this time.

a. At the earliest opportunity, require each trainee, without asking directly, to determine where two other trainees are from, and describe his evidence clearly.

(*) Many of our most prominent Social Scientists can't.

b. At a later date, using as evidence the behavior of other trainees, attempt to outline a general picture of a New Englander, Californian, New Yorker, etc.

c. In this phase, the trainee should be encouraged to discuss and think about such issues as American Foreign Policy, the morality and reasonableness of foreign aid and development, the War in Vietnam. A trainer too wedded to any special position emotionally may have trouble at this point, because he will often have to be the devil's advocate.

d. Exercises in observation without asking questions should begin in this phase.

e. The behavior and character of the training groups should be brought under detailed analysis, particularly at any point when the group becomes excited, angry, or otherwise involved.

Some, but not too many, readings should be assigned dealing with American culture. Suggestions include: Autobiography of Malcolm X; Schneider, American Kinship; a number of selections from Playboy, Affluent Society, perhaps de Tocqueville.

Phase 2

In this phase, the trainee should be prepared through experience to deal with people of a culture different than his own. These should

be extended and direct face-to-face confrontations. On the whole, I believe in immersion rather than sporadic situations. That is, a minimum of two weeks, perhaps the entire training period, should be devoted to living-in and interacting with a community different from the trainee's. In this instance, Hawaii provides dozens of such opportunities.

I suggest for consideration two live-in styles:

a. Nuclear housing live-ins. In this style, several (not more than five) trainees are housed in a community in a separate house. Their responsibilities would be to make entree into the community, learn its culture and style, and draw on it for help and support. This disbursion of living would not necessarily mean disbursion of training. Because most communities are working communities, it would be realistic and reasonable for the trainees to come to a training-site daily for language, tech studies, etc. C/CS would provide a kind of guidance and stimulation input, in the form of taking up specific experiences in communities for detailed exploration, conceptualization and generalization. C/CS would also present questions which could be asked, and the trainees could be expected to answer through their experience. These questions, it is to be hoped, would be increasingly presented by the trainees, inspired by their live-in experience. Assessment of this aspect of the training would be dramatically different, and

I see the Assessment Officer involved with the live-in communities, gathering information about the behavior, style and acceptability of the individual trainees. This information would be made part of the assessment package. At the same time, the trainee's response to the live-in, how interested he becomes in the community, how and what kind of questions reveal themselves to him as a result of his experience, etc., would be a major element of assessment.

b. Family live-in. This style would, of necessity, be a shorter period in which individual trainees would live in the homes of community members. This is an extremely complex situation and one I do not personally favor. The home and family are the core of any cultural system, and one in which a relatively inexperienced person would find real difficulty in gaining useful insights, because of his concern with establishing some kind of modus vivendi with the family. In addition, the strains of bearing the weight of a stranger in the family structure may force an entirely artificial situation to develop in the host family. Moreover, the degree of achievement would be most difficult to assess, because the primary source of information would be the family, which in all probability would not like to be put in the position of informer

on the guest. The family might also prove to be a wall between the trainee and the community. It is very easy in this situation to become a pet rather than a person.

c. Other experiences. For some purposes, total immersion may not be suitable or practical. In these cases, cross-cultural exposure situations can be developed in survey work, plenty of which always seems available. However, such work should be concentrated, that is, several hours each and every day for an extended period of two or more weeks should be devoted to community work. We must consider this as important as any other element of training, and in many cases reduce demands of language or tech studies in order that we assure an adequate exposure. In most cases, this kind of work can be related directly to tech studies, so that no conflict exists.

Work experiences, that is, working with crews of Hawaiian workers in businesses or stores over a period of not less than two weeks and several hours each day could also serve in this phase. The same goals would be aimed at...the ability to meet and deal with people to analyze cultural generalities or structural features from observed behavior,

and to build models for one's own behavior based on observations of other culture behavior.

Phase 3

This deals with country specific materials. It may, in fact, begin at any point in the entire training cycle. However, it would gradually attain major emphasis in the program as the trainees developed, from Phases 1 and 2, the skill or sophistication to recognize what they wanted to know about the host country. This is in one sense the most difficult phase to teach, because it requires a conscious withholding of country specific information in the earlier stages of the project, at a time when the trainee is most demanding of the staff to supply such information. If this is not done, however, the program risks becoming a long list of do's and don'ts, as well as an interminable list of readings about host-country culture, because there is no other means of conveying information of this nature. To fall into such a trap is to send trainees into the field convinced that host-country nationals are made of some fragile material and will collapse at the slightest error made by a Volunteer. In addition the trainee, although he may have a book knowledge of host-country culture, will not have internalized this material or developed his skills in learning about a culture in situ, as it were. This sequence of inputs is suggested:

a. Introduction and orientation to the job.

b. Introduction to landscape and geography through slides, films, and assignments with maps and atlases.

c. Introduction of host-country staff members.

d. Assignments to peruse host-country newspapers and periodicals in English; attendance at host-country films. Each of these activities to be supported by discussion sessions aimed at making the experience relevant to the development of social and cultural analytical skills.

e. Trainees should be encouraged to outline information they would like to have about host country. Where such information can be collected by interaction with host-country staff, or by reference to books, periodicals, records, etc., the trainee should be required to obtain the answers for himself.

(This last activity should not begin until the trainee is able to formulate questions in a meaningful way and be quite specific, preferably developing questions generated from his own analysis of American culture and his experiences in Hawaiian culture.)

f. Trainee discussions of host-country staff responses to the training situation should be encouraged. This is an extremely delicate process, but one which should be carried out. Host-country nationals are seldom good, conscious teachers about their own culture. As unconscious examples they are very good. The elite attitude about the peasantry, for instance, can be pointed

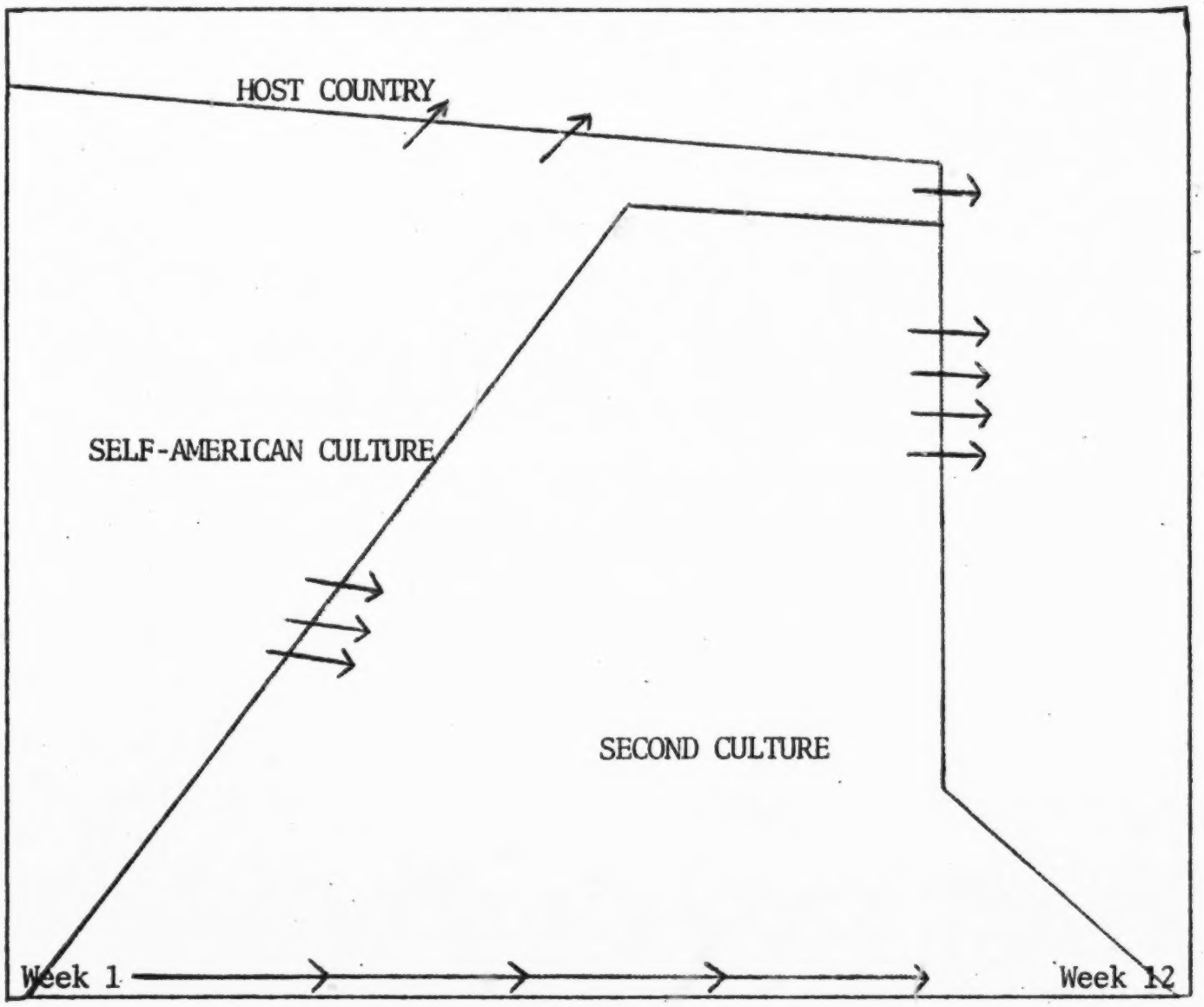
out. Styles of interaction between sexes, responses to typical American behavior patterns, attitudes toward diseases, health, traditional customs, etc., are almost always made explicit in the behavior of host-country staff.

g. The final stages of training should be devoted to the introduction of host-country specific information through the medium of a minimal number of assigned readings and expert lecturers. The selection of these lecturers must be in terms not only of their expertise, but also their ability to lecture well and maintain interest.

h. The final stage is, in fact, a staff activity: the preparation of a handbook of readings on host-country social structure, life-styles, customs, etc., which the Volunteer receives before going in-country, as a kind of a reference work to be used when his in-country experiences make them relevant.

Experience has shown that if properly prepared in Phases 1 and 2, trainees can be asked to draw up a series of questions and study areas related to the host country. Thus far it has been gratifying to see how closely their concerns are to those expressed by RPCVs and host-country nationals. In short, Phases 1 and 2 provide a sort of Pan-Cultural Sensitivity.

THIS CHART, BASED ON A 12-WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM, SHOWS THE THREE-PHASE TRAINING SEQUENCE...IN A MANNER WHICH SUGGESTS THE RELATIVE EMPHASIS OF THE VARIOUS PHASES AT ANY POINT IN THE PROGRAM.



Arrows -- Application of skills, attitudes and new knowledge to different context for solving problems.

CULTURE AND ASSESSMENT

The most frustrating aspect of the culture professional in training is the failure of the system to take into account in any regular way the judgments of the professional about the trainee's qualifications for intercultural work.

This is not, for the most part, due to personal inadequacies in the Assessment Staff, but rather due to a complete lack of criteria for making such assessments. To date assessment and selection have depended on the traditional psychological approach used most frequently to identify psychopathologies. As an instrument to determine intercultural effectiveness, such data are at best minimally useful and most frequently totally useless.

Because few of us have confidence in the assessment data in the context in which they are used, we are forced to fall back on personal judgments, intuition and negotiations. To date culture-professional opinions have tended to sound just like that...opinions, rather than solid behavioral evidence. The most crucial issue, then, is to make sure that the entire training staff is in agreement as to what is and is not valid data for assessment and pertinent as to goals which training wants to achieve. The training outline presented above makes this possible. Rather than ask (which we most generally do) what kind of a person is this trainee, and using the training phases as a period during which we have a chance to find out, we can ask an entirely different question. We can say, "What skills and attitudes must this trainee have before we can send him overseas?" We then attempt to inculcate

these skills and attitudes through training, setting at each point in the sequence clear-cut behavioral goals on which all are agreed. If a trainee achieves these goals, he will be sent overseas; if not, he won't.

This should eliminate the roulette wheel atmosphere of Selection and Assessment. The trainee himself, at any given time, will be able to say, "I have (or have not) achieved the goals set for me by the job I have volunteered to do."

I phrased the last sentence as I did for a specific reason. Regardless of the increasing feeling of humanism in the world or the desire for participation, the trainee cannot set the goals. He can be told what they are very clearly, and decide whether or not he wishes to strive to attain them. This means that the business of explaining the job must be improved. The role-model approach to training should also be applied to teaching, in the sense that trainees should be thoroughly familiar with the process of role-model construction (in all probability, be required to develop the role-model of their jobs by questioning staff) and thus see for themselves how the goals of training are imposed -- not by the client, the Hilo Center, or the host-country government, but by the nature of the job itself.

Two absolute preconditions must be achieved before this system can be implemented:

1. One or more members of the staff must be able to go in-country as far in advance of training as possible, preferably at the point of program development in-country, and there develop detailed role-models. This requires staff members trained

in role-model research, interviewing, observation and intercultural research -- a series of qualifications which can seldom be met on short-term contract employment policies.

2. Job assignments must be defined far more rigidly than in the past. No amount of cultural sensitivity or technical competence or language fluency will make up for the failure of the client agency to provide a meaningful job which is within the capabilities of the Volunteer to perform. This again relates to the need for the earliest possible involvement of the Hilo Center in the development of job descriptions, so that: (a) proper training procedures can be developed; (b) job assignments are in fact amenable to training.

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IN CONCLUSION

This training outline is based on a view of the nature of man which perhaps bears clarification. Man is a unique creature because he can use symbols and make symbols, the most primary focus of this ability being language. He is also unique inasmuch as most of his specific behavior is learned, rather than inherited. The assumption is that the psychic mechanisms of mankind are the same and have been the same for at least a million, perhaps two million years. The differences in human behavior we see between groups of people (i.e., cultures) are therefore not to be explained in terms of differing psychological patterns (which would preclude, if we think about it, any attempt at intercultural understanding) but rather in terms of how the human psychological system reacts to differing structural, environmental, historical, political, technical and economic settings. The specific combined response of the human psyche to this total configuration of influences is called "a culture." The phenomenon itself is called "culture."

Two individuals from the same response system -- that is, people from the same culture -- can set about immediately to define what the other person is in terms of individual personalities operating within a framework of shared patterns. Two persons from differing cultural backgrounds cannot. Rather, they must understand what the other person is in terms of his cultural system before they can begin to find out what he is as an individual personality. This training outline is designed to assist the Volunteer in cutting through the network of intercultural barriers in order that he may communicate directly with human beings. Failure to achieve the first absolutely precludes the second.

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